

# The Tribune

VOICE OF THE PEOPLE

## **Forest Dept to give Kashmiri willow saplings to Lahaul valley farmers**

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The Forest Department will provide saplings of Kashmiri willow tree to farmers free of cost for plantation in Lahaul and Spiti district to replace dying plants.

According to residents of the Lahaul valley, for the past few years, old willow trees have withered away speedily in the region. "Almost 80 per cent willow trees are dead, while 20 per cent are on the verge of dying. This plant is used by them to get fodder and wood for fuel during the winter," they add.

Recently, a delegation of social organisation Jan Chetna of the Lahaul valley had met to the Divisional Forest Officer, Keylong, Dinesh Kumar, over the issue and requested him to provide new saplings of the plant to the farmers of the Lahaul valley.

In the Lahaul valley, farmers grow willow trees on their private land to meet the demand for fodder and fuel. For many families, this plant is a source of livelihood. They sell fodder and wood to earn money to sustain their livelihood.

The Divisional Forest Officer, Keylong, says, "The Forest Department will provide Kashmiri willow saplings to the farmers of Lahaul and Spiti free of cost as per the demand.

They are advised to visit the Forest Department at Keylong for the purpose. The plants must be taken care of properly after plantation as the department gives saplings free of cost to the farmers on this condition."

He says, "Willow trees may have died due to aphid attacks, old planting stocks, wrong choice of plantation sites, rise in temperatures, melting of glaciers and decrease in snowfall. People also cut the branches of willow trees deeply, making these vulnerable to diseases like aphid."

Source: <https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/himachal/forest-dept-to-give-kashmiri-willow-saplings-to-lahaul-valley-farmers-459466>